

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable consideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 106-118, 122-132, 136-144, 148-182 and 184-232 are currently pending in the present application, with Claims 119-121, 133-135, 145-147 and 183 cancelled, and Claims 106, 127, 139, 151, 156, 157 and 179 amended by the present preliminary amendment.

Claims 106-118, 122-132, 136-144, 148-182 and 184-232 were previously pending in now-abandoned parent Application Serial No. 09/831,345. In the Official Action of January 15, 2003 issued for parent Application Serial No. 09/831,345, then pending Claims 121, 147, 156, and 182 were indicated as containing allowable subject matter. In the present application, independent Claim 106 has been amended to include all of the contents of allowable Claim 121, independent Claims 127 and 139 have been amended to include all of the contents of allowable Claim 147, independent Claim 151 has been amended to include all of the contents of allowable Claim 156, and independent Claim 179 has been amended to include all of the contents of allowable Claim 183. Therefore, Applicants submit the inventions defined by independent Claims 106, 127, 139, 151, and 179, and all claims depending therefrom, are not anticipated and are not rendered obvious by the previously asserted prior art for at least the reasons stated noted in the previously identified Official Action of January 15, 2003.

Application No. 10/618,590  
Preliminary Amendment

Accordingly, examination on the merits of Claims 106-118, 122-132, 136-144, 148-182 and 184-232 is believed to be in order, and an early and favorable action on the merits is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,  
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Masayasu Mori".

Masayasu Mori  
Attorney of Record  
Registration No. 47,301  
Michael E. Monaco  
Registration No. 52,041

Customer Number

**22850**

Tel: (703) 413-3000  
Fax: (703) 413 -2220  
MM/MEM/kkn

I:\ATTY\MM\MAMENDMENT\10944\240394.PRE..DOC